

**USDA Forest Service
Lolo National Forest
Superior Ranger District**

**Requests for Comments on Environmental Assessment
Cruzane Mountain Project**

The Lolo National Forest is accepting comments on the Environmental Assessment completed for the Cruzane Mountain project. This 3,790-acre project area is located on the Superior Ranger District, approximately 3 miles west of Haugen in Mineral County, Montana and just northeast of the community of Saltese. The purposes of the Cruzane Mountain project are to address past and current insect and disease impacts that have increased the risk of severe wildfire within the project area. In order to support a more healthy and resilient forest in the future, there is a need to manage forest species composition, improve the genetic quality of the forest, and address the increased amount of fuels that have accumulated in the project area as a result of forest health impacts and lack of fire activity.

The Forest is proposing to implement commercial and non-commercial vegetation management, as well as road management, and prescribed burning within the project area to meet the purposes of this project. Commercial treatments include approximately 981 acres of regeneration harvests, 417 acres of commercial thinning, and 13 acres of improvement cuts. Three large openings (greater than 40 acres) would result from regeneration harvests and would consist of a mosaic of clearcuts with leave trees, shelterwood, and seed tree harvests. Non-commercial treatments include approximately 15 acres of fuel breaks along NFS Rd 288 and 77 acres of pre-commercial thinning. Prescribed burning is proposed over approximately 1,161 acres. Road management activities include road maintenance (4.5 miles), reconstruction (6.8 miles), construction (4 miles), storage (2 miles) and decommissioning (5.5 miles). Additionally, 2.7 miles of system roads would receive maintenance to carry out project activities and would be decommissioned after associated activities are completed.

The proposed project is subject to pre-decisional objection process at 36 CFR §218 Subparts A and B. In accordance with 36 CFR 218.5, individuals or organizations wishing to be eligible to submit objections seeking Pre-decisional Administrative Review must provide the following information: a) Your name and address, b) Title of the Project, c) Specific comments (§ 218.2) on the proposed action, along with supporting reasons that the Responsible Official should consider in reaching a decision, and d) Your signature or other means of identification verification must be provided for the individual authorized to represent your organization.

Although comments are accepted at any time before a final decision is made, they must be postmarked or received within 30 days beginning the day after publication of the legal notice in the newspaper of record, The Missoulian, to be eligible for the objection process. We anticipate that this will be published in the March 2nd, 2020 edition of the paper. To submit comments, please send written/typed responses to Superior Ranger District, Attn: Carole Johnson, 209 W. Riverside Ave, Superior, MT 59872, or email: comments-northern-lolo-superior@fs.fed.us with 'Cruzane Mountain Project' in the subject line.

For more information or assistance obtaining project information, please contact Liz Tichner at 406-329-3480 or email elizabeth.tichner@usda.gov. Project information, including the environmental assessment and proposed action maps, can be found on the project website: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=56156#20594505> March 2, 2020